

Sleeping Skipper Hoop Giant Awakened

By Steve MacQuarrie

In the 1920's Cohasset had a superb basketball team. Led by Nathaniel Hurwitz, Hugh Murphy, Paddy Grant and Frederick Grassie, this professional club capped a brilliant 44 game victory streak by winning the New England championship.

Since then, however, the sport has been asleep so long here that it makes Rip Van Winkle look like an insomniac. Until this year.

In 1979 it was a high school team, and this time the names were Paul Farren, Matt Salerno, Brian Keating, John Howley, Mark Goff, Tom Higgins and Rich Tibbets. And while the Skippers' longest victory streak was but six games, their 17 and six record is the best in the school's history and they came closer to win-

ning any basketball tournament than a Cohasset team has since 1922.

The Skippers' advanced to the semi-finals of the Division III South tournament, losing by 10 points (after trailing by two with less than two minutes to go) to Cathedral, the tournament winner and a heavy favorite to cop the state championship this Saturday.

They got that close to the Boston school without Keating, their second leading scorer and rebounder, and a player whose skills under the basket could have penetrated the wall of bodies that Cathedral positioned inside.

Reaching the semi-finals, however, was no small accomplishment, especially for a team that was five and 11 a year ago. The recipe, for those who believe that anyone can be a Henry Higgins, just

by using a formula, runs like this:

1. One coach (John LeVangie) who knows what it takes — AS AN ORGANIZER, A TACTICIAN, AND A PERSON — to win.

2. Six seniors (co-captains Farren and Salerno, along with Howley, Tebbets, Higgins and Billy O'Brien) whose self confidence and energy transcended the school's poor basketball tradition.

3. Six underclassmen (Goff, Bill Kurtz, Bill Taylor, Jim McCarthy, Tom McMahon, and Jimmy O'Brien) who had tasted success as J.V.'s last year and were eager for the full course.

4. One dash of luck (the arrival in the fall of transfer student Keating).

The real key was LeVangie's ability to mold a team that, unlike many other high school outfits, depended on no single player for its accomplishments. Nine different players started at least one game.

The old cliche about the character building attributes of school sports is largely

bunk. Yet in Cohasset this year LeVangie's players learned that they didn't have to keep losing — that with hard work, confidence, preparation, and a knowledge of what they were doing they could be winners. It is a lesson that

may not be entirely clear to them now, but one that will crystallize in the future.

The future should also bring more success to Cohasset basketball. The sport is now awake here and the five decade wait should not recur.

Old Ironsides Program

How the USS Constitution Museum in Charlestown serves as a showcase for memorabilia connected with "Old Ironsides" and as a platform for increasing understanding of our maritime history, will be described at a public dinner meeting of the Cohasset Historical Society Tuesday, March 27, at the Unitarian Parish House.

The presentation will follow a catered dinner to be served at 6:30 p.m. The public is welcome and reservations at \$5 each may be made by calling Mrs. Edna Pratt at 383-1672 or Mrs. E. Lawrence Parker, 383-0773. Deadline for reservations is Friday, March 23.

The speaker will be Peter Sterling, director of the USS Constitution Museum, who will illustrate his talk with

slides. Sterling became director of the museum last August after being director of group visits and educational programs at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Virginia. In that capacity he was responsible for developing instructional programs for students, adults and special groups totalling over 300,000 a year.

For the past 15 years he has been involved in teaching and museum education. He was a teacher and administrator at New Hampton School in New Hampshire before returning to his alma mater Davidson College in North Carolina as director of co-curricular activities in 1970. Since entering the museum field, Sterling has spoken at many national gatherings of museum organizations.

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